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White House Still Standing On May 22 Nixon Statement

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SAN CLEMENTE, CALIF., June 26—The White House today stood behind the May 22 statement in which President Nixon denied any prior knowledge of the Watergate break-in, denied that he had offered executive clemency to any of the conspirators, and insisted that he had no knowledge of the cover-up until late March.

That statement "still stands," Deputy Press Secretary Gerald Warren said. "It was very clear."

Warren refused, as press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler had Monday, to discuss the specific charges former counsel John W. Dean III has made before the Senate investigating committee or to offer any reaction from the President.

The President's May 22 statement is directly at odds with major points of Dean's testimony, made under oath before the Ervin committee Monday and today.

Ziegler said yesterday that the White House had no intention of commenting on Dean's testimony while he was in the witness chair, and Warren stuck to that position today under sharp questioning.

He even went further at one point in suggesting that no new presidential statement on Watergate is being planned for the immediate future. Ziegler said yesterday that there were no plans for a presidential news conference this week or next.

Asked to describe the President's mood, Warren said, "His mood is very good." When he saw the President this morning, Warren said, he was working on plans for the remainder of the week, including a meeting Friday with French Foreign Minister Michel Jobert and a meeting with the permanent representatives of NATO Saturday.

Mr. Nixon plans to send a special message on energy requirements to congress sometime this week, Warren said.

Asked why he thought the President's mood was good, Warren said, "It was my impression that his mood was good. My impression was that when he was discussing pending decisions and meetings he was discussing them with determination."

The deputy press secretary again said that Mr. Nixon is not watching the Senate committee proceedings on television but is receiving oral and written reports from his staff. Asked how much time the President is devoting to Watergate, Warren said, "Very little."

Warren declined to say whom the President was keeping in touch with on the Dean testimony, how the hearings were being monitored for the President, when the President would break his silence, or what the President's reaction is to the Dean charges.

As for the federal expenditures on the President's California residence, Warren said Mr. Nixon was "unaware" of many of the improvements by the General Services Administration. Warren said they were made for security reasons and not at the President's request, and that the President didn't know about most of them until after they were completed.

In an accounting of expenditures on the Nixon estate here, GSA reported that it had spent a total of $707,367, including money for a flag pole, furnishing of the President's office in his home, landscaping and other improvements.

Asked if Mr. Nixon would ask a review of the outlays, Warren said he had no indication.

On Saturday, Mr. Nixon also will meet here with four senators and four representatives who will visit China July 2 to 16.

The group is led by Sen. Warren G. Magnuson (D-Wash.) and House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Thomas E. Morgan (D-Pa.). The group will stop here en route to Hawaii, Guam and China.

The congressmen have been invited by the Chinese People's Institute for Foreign Affairs, the same organization that earlier was host to Sens. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Hugh D. Scott (R-Pa.) and Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R-Mich.) and the late Rep. Hale Boggs (D-La.).

Also scheduled to make the forthcoming trip are Sens. John J. Sparkman (D-Ala.). Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) and Gale W. McGee (D-Wyo.) and Reps. William S. Mailliard (R-Calif.) and Jerry L. Pettis (R-Calif.).

Richard H. Solomon, the senior national security staff expert on China, will accompany the group. He previously accompanied national security adviser Henry A. Kissinger on his visits to Peking.

In another action here, the President said he would nominate Alberto Faustino Trevino, Jr., a California architect, to be a member of the board of the Community Development Corp. If Trevino is confirmed, the President will designate him general manager of the corporation.